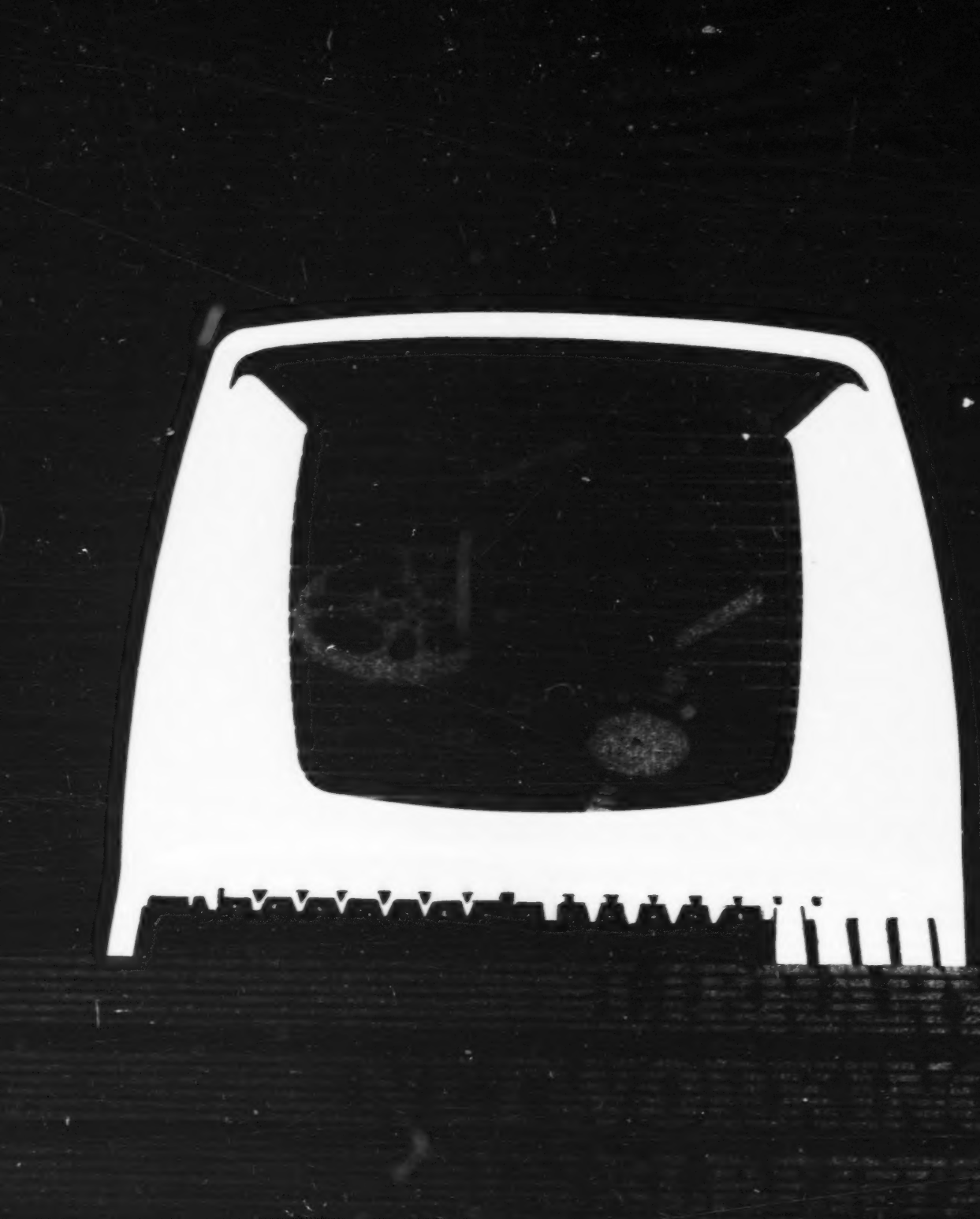


LIBRARY NETWORKING IN ALBERTA

ADVANCED EDUCATION
CULTURE
EDUCATION

LIBRARY NETWORKING IN ALBERTA
prepared by
The Interdepartmental Liaison Group on Library Development

Alberta Advanced Education
- Dr. Doug Crawford
- Ms. June Morgan

Alberta Culture
- Ms. Barbara Clubb
- Mr. Joe Forsyth
- Ms. Olga Gil

Alberta Education
- Ms. Blanche Friderichsen
- Mrs. Helen Skirrow

Edmonton, Alberta
November, 1982

We would like to thank the Indiana Department of Public Instruction, Division of Instructional Media for permission to use their publication 'Critical Issues in Co-operative Library Development-Networks'.

International Standard Book Number
ISBN 0-919411-10-X

For additional single copies contact:

	Alberta Advanced Education, Learning Systems Branch	**427-7514**
or	Further Education Branch	**427-5624**
	Alberta Culture, Library Services Branch	**427-2556**
or	Alberta Education, Field Services Branch	**427-2952**
	Library Services Unit	**427-2985**

All segments of society including business, government agencies, cities and towns, universities, colleges, hospitals, schools and museums, maintain libraries as essential components of their operation.

The growth of information is so explosive and vast that no one library can contain it all. Libraries have a collective responsibility to share resources in order to improve each user's chance of getting the information needed.

A network is made up of co-operating libraries that have established communication links. Outside the province of Alberta, computer-based networks have developed to help libraries share their resources through the use of computer-technology.

The services which on-line computer-based library networks are now able to provide include:

- co-operative cataloguing
- automatic production of catalogue cards
- acquisitions
- organization of journals and periodicals
- computer output microform catalogues
- management data and statistics
- local printing of cataloguing information via terminal printers
- training in the use of automated network services
- interlibrary loan
- access to information retrieval services
- lists of new books
- automated lending of materials to users
- lists of periodicals held in one or more libraries
- research and development
- co-operative planning
- sharing of human resources and experience

A computer-based Alberta library network has the potential to make the collections of libraries in Alberta, and the research and reference resources outside the province available to all residents.

In May 1973, the Alberta government commissioned a major study for the long range development of co-ordinated library services in Alberta. 'The Right to Know' by L.W. Downey Associates noted three factors inhibiting network development at that time:

- A tendency to leave improvements to the initiative of each individual library rather than through a co-operative, co-ordinated approach.
- A fragmentation of the interest of libraries to become part of an integrated province-wide network, with formal linkages to national and international bibliographic information and services.
- A lack of capital resources to initiate a network on a provincial scale.

The report recommended that the Government of Alberta provide a network that would give libraries the linkages with each other and with external resources to ensure that comprehensive services be accessible to Albertans regardless of place of residence and level of development of local libraries.

A number of forms of networking have since been developed in Alberta. At present, their prime function is to supply an estimated 65,000 interlibrary loans annually.
Other services include:

- The sharing of resources through the Library Services Branch of Alberta Culture. Linkage is by toll-free teletype and telephone or by mail.
- The searching of ILL mail requests for public libraries through the Extension Library of the University of Alberta. Those that cannot be filled are forwarded to Library Services which requests searches by teletype from ten major public libraries. Those still unfilled are relayed to the University of Calgary and then to other parts of Canada.
- Special loan agreements with the Saskatchewan Provincial Library, Northwest Territorial Public Library Services, and libraries in the Pacific Northwest.
- Alberta Government libraries in most areas have collections listed with the Legislature Library and share access through the government courier system.

- The Research Council of Alberta and the University of Calgary are linked with the Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information in Ottawa and the National Library through special courier delivery services.
- The four Alberta Universities maintain an interlibrary loan service.
- A number of services such as the South Central Alberta Film Federation acquisition and delivery service are in place.
- Linkages outside Alberta include arrangements with the University of Toronto Library Automated System.
- Central Alberta Media Services (CAMS) is an automated regional film centre providing on-line searching and booking of films to schools from Fort Chipewyan to Wetaskiwin and from Jasper to Lloydminster.

A major new study of networking in Alberta was conducted in 1980/81. Under a research contract, Schick Information Systems of Edmonton examined the needs for automation in catalogue support systems, acquisition and circulation, as well as the feasibility of a provincial listing of library materials.

The study also examined existing co-operative ventures among libraries; evaluated the services available from vendors of automated systems and described system models that could meet the expressed needs of all of Alberta's libraries.

The study recommended that:

- Any network be designed to accommodate all types of libraries.
- Participation in the network be voluntary.
- Access to the listings of Alberta's libraries be a high priority.
- Communication and delivery costs be adjusted so that the services can be used by small libraries far from central service points.
- User libraries be permitted to select the services they want.
- A network newsletter to keep all libraries informed of current and future developments be published regularly.

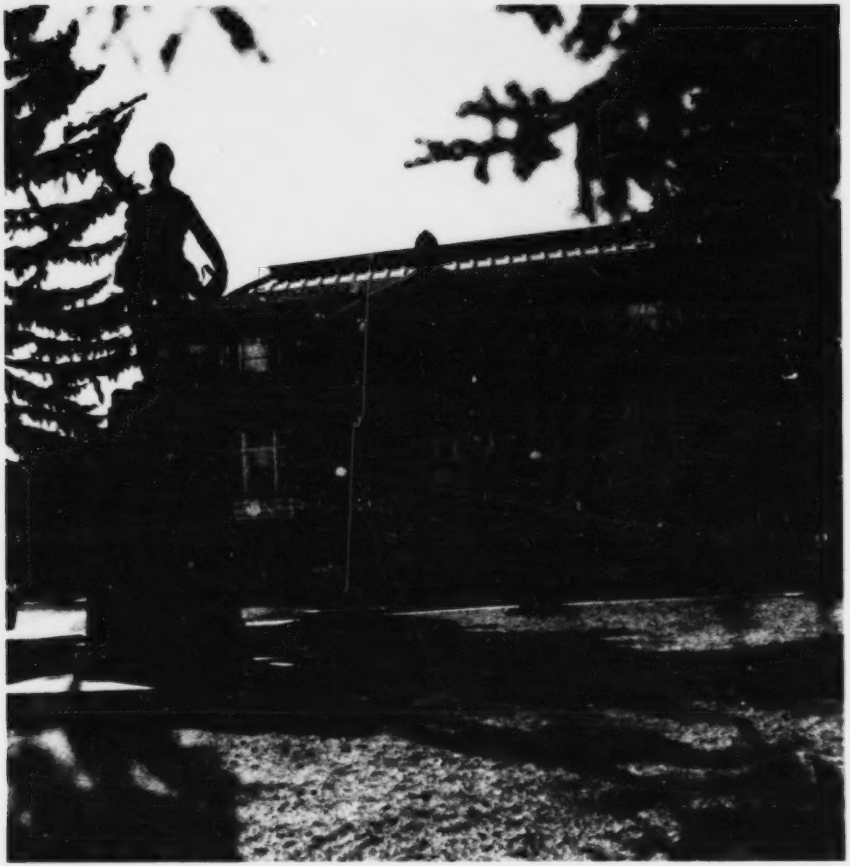
- Potential members be contacted regularly to enable them to participate in the final design of the network.
- A planning committee be formed to prepare detailed specifications and standards.
- The network provide automated systems consulting services.
- The network be designed to allow interaction with other provincial and national networks.
- Start up funding come from establishment grants from the provincial government.

- A program of compensation be introduced for libraries whose resources make them net contributors to the network.
- The condition for basic network membership be the willingness to sign a standard resource sharing agreement.
- There be several categories of membership in the network.
- A network planning committee be established to recommend a legal and governance structure for the network.
- The organization structure be independent from any one provincial government department.

The three government departments of Alberta Culture, Alberta Advanced Education and Alberta Education have since convened two meetings of representatives of all types of libraries and library associations. This Network Assembly has adopted eight principles for library networking in Alberta.

These are:

1. **Decentralization** — A successful network is decentralized, recognizes the diversity of network participants, and will grow from its parts rather than be created by a central agency.
2. **Acceptance of Local Responsibility** — An essential element of a decentralized network must be the acceptance by each participant of responsibility for its own basic development.
3. **Voluntary Participation** — The decision to join the network must be a voluntary one made at the local level.
4. **Universality** — Any organized library, library grouping or related agency in Alberta is a potential network participant.
5. **Acceptance of common responsibility** — Before participation, the local institution should state its willingness to accept the common responsibilities required by the concept of networking.
6. **Equitable Governance** — The network must establish a form of governance that is simple and equitable.
7. **Compensation** — Every participant in the network will be expected to both share and to benefit from sharing.
8. **Equalization** — Some participants will be small and/or not as strong as others. Once these participants have exhausted local resources, they must be assured of reasonable access to the general benefits of the network.

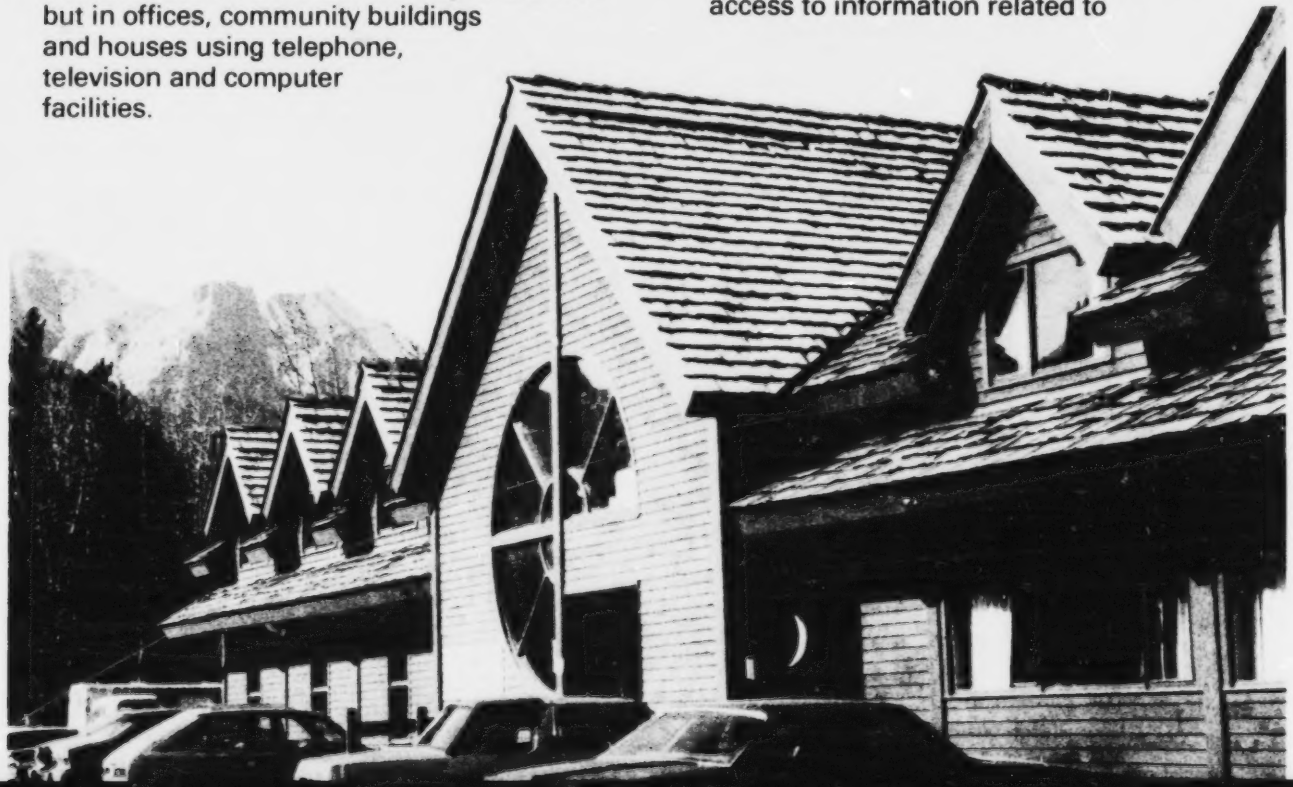


The Network Assembly has appointed a Network Executive to work toward provision of information about networking to the library community and to move the Network concept ahead.

We cannot network individual library users. A person's ability to obtain information will depend on the number of access points available to local libraries and the resource available there.

Some possibilities for the future include:

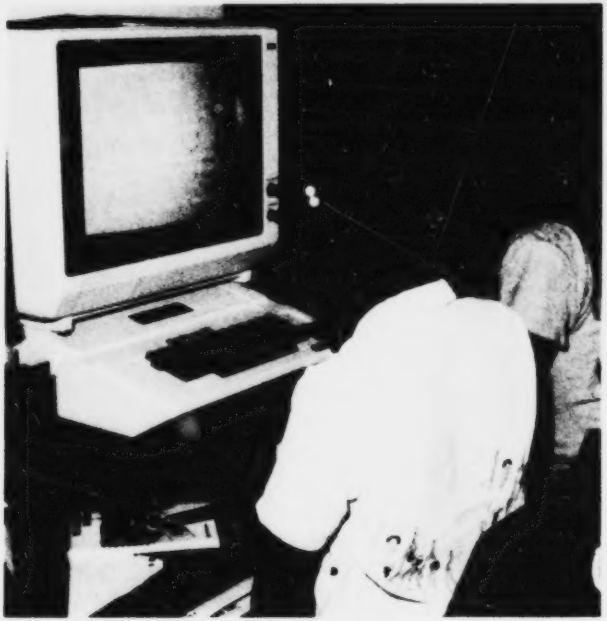
- The location of terminals not only in libraries but in offices, community buildings and houses using telephone, television and computer facilities.
- Communication links that make it easier to serve isolated communities and users. High density information storage may make it possible to package 'libraries' of popular materials for wide and inexpensive distribution.
- The provision of library terminals in classrooms so that children can have access to information related to



classroom projects. Libraries could provide similar facilities for adults.

- The development of 'media modules' in libraries to allow for convenient use of information regardless of format. Data can be integrated to provide comprehensive access to information on any subject.
- A human resource network to parallel the bibliographic network. The current Alberta Library Zenith number is a beginning in this reference and referral service area.
- There are indications that Alberta's libraries might be best served by a network of library systems linked together by computer.

What kind of Library network system will best suit the needs of Alberta? It is important that every library, librarian and library trustee take part in the debate by making the needs of their clients known.



For more information about how networking could affect your library contact:

Ms. Olga Gil
Alberta Culture, Library Services
16214 - 114 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5M 2Z5 **427-2556**

Dr. Doug Crawford
Alberta Advanced Education,
Learning Systems Branch
6th Floor Devonian Building
11160 - Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0L1 **427-7514**

Ms. Blanche Friderichsen
Alberta Education, Field Services Branch
3rd Floor Edwards Building
10053 - 111 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2H3 **427-2952**

Or members of the Network Executive:

Mr. Alan MacDonald (Chair)
University of Calgary
2500 University Drive, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2N 1N4 **284-5956**

Mr. Dennis Seaman
Calgary Board of Education
Media Services
3610 - 9th Street, S.E.
Calgary, Alberta
T2G 3C5 **294-8543**

Ms. Olga Gil (see p. 13)

Ms. Jean Crozier
CASLIS, Edmonton Chapter
#203 - 10644 - 81 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 1X9 **439-5705**

Mr. Ron Peters
S.A.I.T.
1301 - 16th Avenue, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta
T2M 0L4 **284-8647**

Mr. Vince Richards
Edmonton Public Library
#7 Sir Winston Churchill Square
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 2V4 **423-2331**

Ms. Sharon Gee
Alberta Research Council Library
5th Floor, Terrace Plaza Office Tower
4445 Calgary Trail
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5R7 **438-1810**

Canada. National Research Council. **The final report of the network development and implementation group.** Ottawa: 1977.

Canadian School Library Association. Committee on Networking and Resource Sharing. **The role of school libraries in networks at the local, regional, provincial and national levels.** Ottawa: 1980. 13p.

Duchesne, R.M., D.A. Guenther and M. Islam. **Towards more effective library networking in Canada.** Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1979. Approx. 60p.

Duchesne, Roderick. **Selected Canadian Library Network Terms.** Canadian Network Papers, no. 4. Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1982. 8 p.

Durance, Cynthia J. **Initiatives towards a bibliographic communications network for Canada.** Canadian Network Papers, no. 2. Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1982. 8 p.

Ellis, R. "Interrelationship of libraries and resource sharing." **Bookmark** 38: 30-3, Fall, 1978.

Gillham, V. and M. Beckman. "Individual autonomy and successful networking: A Canadian experience." In **New Horizons for Academic Libraries**, pp. 291-295. Edited by R.D. Stuart and R.D. Johnson. Ridgewood, New Jersey: G.K. Saur, 1979.

Hill, S. "Network development and governance." **Special Libraries** 71: 108-12, February 1980.

Kent, Allen and Thomas J. Galvin eds. **The structure and governance of library networks.** New York, N.Y.: Marcel Dekker Inc. 1979. 352p.

National Library of Canada. The future of the national library of Canada. Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1979. 88p.

Shoffner, Ralph M. and Mary A. Madden. **British Columbia Library Networks: a study of feasibility.** Richmond B.C.: British Columbia Union Catalogue, 1980. Approx. 250 p.

Symposium on Library Systems & Networks, Winnipeg. 1974 **Canadian Library Systems and Networks: their planning and development.** Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1974. 50p.

Williams, David R. and Derek Francis. **Requirements and priorities of public libraries in British Columbia for a provincial automated library network.** New Westminster, B.C.: LMG - The Library Management Group, 1980. 38 p.